REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1 to 13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over either Talley, Jr. et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,767,498, Wagner et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,838,043, or Dugan et al., U.S. Publication No. 2003/0062658.

Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. 103(a)

Claims 1 to 13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over either Talley, Jr. et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,767,498, Wagner et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,838,043, or Dugan et al., U.S. Publication No. 2003/0062658.

Talley Jr. et al. discloses multicomponent filaments or fibers that "can be formed into a fabric structure, and the multicomponent fibers split during or after fabric formation. For example, staple fiber can be fed into a carding apparatus to form a carded layer." (See col. 14, lines 29-33). The "nonwoven web can be formed into a unitary coherent nonwoven fabric and thereafter thermally treated to split the fibers." (See col. 16, lines 18-20). Additionally, if complete splitting of the multicomponent fibers is not achieved via thermal treatment additional splitting can be achieved by the simple working of the yarn or fabric. "For example, the yarn or fabric can be placed under tension to re-stretch the elastomeric filaments and then released to cause the elastomeric filaments to relax." (See col. 16, lines 60-64).

Wagner et al. discloses a "process for the production of a synthetic leather, includes the steps that multi-component endless filaments are spun from the melt, aerodynamically stretched, and immediately deposited to form a nonwoven layer, that preliminary bonding takes place, and that the nonwoven fabric is bonded by high-pressure fluid jets and, at the same time, split into supermicro endless filaments with a titer < 0.2 dtex, and subsequently impregnated and/or coated with a polymer." (See col. 2, lines 24-33).

Dugan et al. discloses a fabric formation process used "to dissociate the multicomponent fiber into microfilaments. Stated differently, forces applied to the multicomponent fibers of the invention during fabric formation in effect split or dissociate the polymer components to form

microfilaments... the hydroentangling process used to form the nonwoven fabric dissociates the composite fiber." (See paragraph [0063]).

Claim 1 one of the present application provides a method for manufacturing a fabric from yarns, fibers or filaments, including first elementary filaments of a first polymer and second elementary filaments of a second polymer, the method comprising:

receiving the yarns, fibers or filaments, from a common spinneret;

forming the yarns, fibers or filaments into a single first fabric;

compressing the first fabric to a density of at least 10% of a density of the first polymer, the compressing being performed at a temperature between a glass transition temperature and a melting temperature of the first polymer; and

subsequently applying a further mechanical force so as to cause an at least partial splitting of the yarns, fibers or filaments into the first and second elementary filaments.

The Office Action completely fails to address the limitation of "compressing the first fabric to a density of at least 10% of a density of the first polymer, the compressing being performed at a temperature between a glass transition temperature and a melting temperature of the first polymer."

Moreover, the claim states that "subsequently applying a further mechanical force so as to cause an at least partial splitting of the yarns, fibers or filaments into the first and second elementary filaments" is applied.

It is respectfully submitted that it would not have been obvious to have provided any compressing step prior to the applying step, nor has the Office Action at all addressed this limitation.

Withdrawal of the rejections to the claims under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

The present application is respectfully submitted as being in condition for allowance and applicants respectfully request such action.

Respectfully submitted,
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